

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-13: (Canceled)

Claim 14: (New) A method of decreasing collagen synthesis, comprising:

administering a synthetic relaxin-like factor to cells of a human, wherein said cells express relaxin receptors; and

allowing the synthetic relaxin-like factor to contact the receptors for a period of time and under conditions such that the receptors are activated, and collagen synthesis is decreased;

the synthetic relaxin-like factor comprising an A chain and a B chain,

said A chain having the amino acid sequence:

Ala-Ala-Ala-Thr-Asn-Pro-Ala-Arg-Tyr-Cys-Cys-Leu-Ser-Gly-Cys-Thr-Gln-Gln-
Asp-Leu-Leu-Thr-Leu-Cys-Pro-Tyr (SEQ ID NO:3)

or said amino acid sequence (SEQ ID NO:3) truncated by up to about 6 amino acids from the N terminus and/or by up to 6 amino acids from the C-terminus;

said B chain having the amino acid sequence:

Pro-Thr-Pro-Glu-Met-Arg-Glu-Lys-Leu-Cys-Gly-His-His-Phe-Val-Arg-Ala-Leu-
Val-Arg-Val-Cys-Gly-Gly-Pro-Arg-Trp-Ser-Thr-Glu-Ala (SEQ ID NO:4)

or said amino acid sequence (SEQ ID NO:4) truncated by up to 5 amino acids from the N-terminus and/or by up to 5 amino acids from the C-terminus;

said A and B chains linked by disulfide bonds between amino acid residue number 11 of SEQ ID NO:3 and amino acid number 10 of SEQ ID NO:4.

Claim 15: (New) The method of claim 14, wherein the synthetic relaxin-like factor is attached to a detectable label.

Claim 16: (New) The method of claim 14, wherein the synthetic relaxin-like factor is chemically synthesized.

Claim 17: (New) The method of claim 14, wherein the synthetic relaxin-like factor is recombinantly produced.